

Temple of Eternity

R. Scott Boyer

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Temple of Eternity is a suspenseful adventure story whose hero travels the globe, learning that all is interconnected.

In R. Scott Boyer's thrilling novel *Temple of Eternity*, a teenager fights to save his friends from a malevolent cabal.

Bobby escapes the clutches of an evil organization, Core, but finds that some of his friends are still missing. While waiting for a clue about their location, Bobby trains under a wise chief, who explains the ways of the anima, or energy, that connects all living things. Bobby makes massive, rapid forays into these teachings. When sightings of his friends are reported in the jungles of Guatemala, Bobby, along with his cousin and Chief, embarks on a perilous expedition. The three are caught up in tribal warfare and a battle for an ancient temple.

Bobby's ability to see and interact with the energy flowing through the world is the novel's primary concern. Without reflecting a specific faith or spiritual background, this energy is described in a blend of science fiction with religion: Bobby can bond with animals, communicate with restless spirits, and break through mind control to rescue innocent people. Bobby is not alone in being powerful, though; most of the young adults captured by Core have similar abilities.

Bobby's efforts to rescue the captured teenagers twists when he learns to communicate with an undiscovered tribe and their ancestors. He relives the traumatic events that led up to its spirits' deaths in a series of flashbacks; these play a pivotal role in the climax of the story. However, Bobby's powers of communication are sometimes underutilized, as when the superstitious tribe is forced into offering help, rather than being treated with empathy. Still, the book's chapters are short and often end with tantalizing cliffhangers; these hold attention. Bobby faces terrifying anaconda rides, views past lives, and encounters a superior force with little to no advantage.

Beyond the massive revelations they're party to, and the strange powers they possess, Bobby and his friends are underdeveloped; Bobby seems unchanged by what he experiences. Only Slab, a giant teenager with a cherubic face who was abused by Core and is forced to slaughter several of his friends, has a concrete motivation; he's made to confront the mental and physical trauma that Core left him with in a way that others are not.

Bobby's singular goal of finding his missing friends drives the narrative towards a satisfying conclusion in which the spirits, too, find some resolution. *Temple of Eternity* is a suspenseful adventure story whose hero travels the globe, learning that all is interconnected.

JOHN M. MURRAY (October 15, 2020)

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